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SECURITY INFORMATION

SE-43

15 April 1953

3. In Western Europe <sup>even</sup> the immediate effect of even a temporary and slight relaxation of tensions would be further delay <sup>west</sup> ~~the~~ French ratification of the EDC. <sup>if</sup> Should the USSR go beyond conciliatory gestures and minor concessions <sup>if m. n. w. t. p.</sup> and, for example, agree to an Austrian peace treaty, <sup>=</sup> then the French reaction to EDC would be even more negative.

<sup>The peoples of Western Europe would welcome</sup>  
4. In Western Europe generally, even minor concessions would be welcomed as a contribution to peace, but the Western governments <sup>hesitated to</sup> would await further Soviet acts in the conviction that minor concessions and even the signing of an Austrian peace treaty, would not <sup>end</sup> materially lessen the menace presented to Western Europe by Communism and Soviet power. However, in the unlikely event that the Kremlin offered to surrender its control over East Germany and agreed to the establishment of a united, democratic and neutralized Germany, the governments of Western Europe, including the West German government, would almost certainly accept such a proposal as evidence of a genuine shift in Soviet policy.

5. If, as we believe probable, the Kremlin is unwilling to accept any solution of the German problem which would jeopardize Soviet control over East Germany, we do not believe the "peace"

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*weaken NATO or other*  
tactics of the USSR would have any decisive results in Western Europe.

So far as the EDC is concerned, French action, over the long run, would probably be determined by unwillingness to *jeopardize* ~~weaken~~ the alliance

with the US or to risk a German-American "understanding" from which

France would be excluded. In general, actions of the USSR along

the lines of *minor* Soviet concessions would not basically *alter* ~~affect~~

the Western-oriented, non-Communist pattern of democratic Europe.

NATO would continue; military conscription would be retained; military

budgets would be cut but would remain substantial, and present force

levels would not be reduced drastically.

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FOOTNOTE; By "minor concessions" are meant such steps as the reduction of anti-Western propaganda, relaxation of present travel restrictions ~~in East~~ Germany, resumption of quadripartite control of Berlin, return of POWs, release of political prisoners and kidnapes, a program of tourist traffic to the USSR sufficient to permit claims of "lifting" the Iron Curtain to be made, general improvement of personal and official relations with non-USSR states and individuals, reduction of occupation forces, and the like.

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